

Process Overview

This chapter examines the origins of the Mayor's Infrastructure Finance Committee effort and the process employed in formulating the recommendations presented later in this report. The chapter is divided into the following five sections:

Mayor's Charge Statement
Committee and Work Group Organization
Membership Selection and Members
Meeting Process
Community Input Opportunities

Mayor's Charge Statement

Lincoln Mayor Don Wesely initiated this review of infrastructure financing needs in October of 2002. This process began with the Mayor issuing a "Charge Statement" articulating the goals and conditions of the review.

For this study, the term "**public infrastructure**" was defined to include the following:

Streets and Highways
Water
Wastewater
Stormwater
Parks

As called for in the Mayor's Charge Statement, the expressed purpose of the effort was to ***"seek consensus on a realistic comprehensive financial package ensuring the maintenance of existing public infrastructure and the delivery of future public infrastructure to facilitate community growth."*** As part of this effort, care was to be taken to "be sensitive to the efforts its recommendations may have on Lincoln's citizens, businesses, neighborhoods, economic development, and people of all income groups."

The Mayor's Charge Statement also included a series of "Key Working Assumptions." These assumptions were to provide a basis for guiding the work of the citizen representatives who would be taking part in the process. These key assumptions were as follows:

- 1 Comprehensive Plan:** The City-County Comprehensive Plan was to serve as the framework for the assumed: (a) future rate of population growth; (b) the direction of growth; and (c) the phasing of growth.



- 2 **Balanced Funding:** The process was to seek a “balanced funding approach” affirming the maintenance of existing infrastructure, supporting broad community benefits, and providing for the timely expansion of planned infrastructure.



The funding to meet these goals was to be both timely and adequate. Also, the maintenance of existing facilities was to be given primary consideration, followed by projects of broad community benefit (for example, the South and East Beltways and Antelope Valley), and, finally, infrastructure improvements furthering planned urban growth.

- 3 **Public Infrastructure Elements:** The work effort was to focus exclusively on streets and highways, water, wastewater, stormwater, and park facilities.
- 4 **Time Horizon:** The financing package resulting from this effort was to cover at a minimum the next 6 years, and longer as appropriate.
- 5 **Impact Fees:** Future financial contributions from development impact fees were to be assumed as provided for in the Mayor’s August 26, 2002, proposal, as amended.

Also expressed in the Mayor’s Charge Statement was a basic schedule for completion of the assigned tasks. In order to ensure that the results could be used during the City’s Fiscal Year 2003-2004 budget deliberations, the Mayor asked that the work be completed and a report submitted to him by no later than June 1, 2003.

Committee and Work Group Organization

Given the allotted time frame for completing the review and complexity of the issues, the Mayor’s Charge Statement established a two-tiered study process. A single oversight Committee would be created with the responsibility for guiding the review and preparing the final set of recommendations. Under this Committee would be three “Work Groups” with specifically assigned tasks:

- ” **Finance Work Group** – This group was charged with formulating a comprehensive financial program for closing the City’s long term funding gap for urban infrastructure maintenance and expansion.



- " **Cost Savings and Efficiency Work Group** – This group's role was to consider ways to make certain the City's infrastructure is "planned, programmed, and constructed in the most reasonably efficient manner possible."
- " **Legislation Work Group** – The group was to "consider and recommend possible changes in State legislation that would facilitate and enhance the funding of infrastructure for the City of Lincoln."

Membership Selection and Members

Membership on the Committee and the three Work Groups was drawn from throughout the community. Letters were sent to numerous businesses, neighborhood groups, and community organizations requesting volunteers to serve on the various bodies. Nearly a hundred individuals submitted their name for consideration. Many of these represented organizations, while others were merely expressing a sincere interest in serving as a community representative.

After reviewing the resumes and expressed interests of the volunteers the following assignments were made to the main Committee:

Mayor's Infrastructure Finance Committee

Brad Korell*	Jan Gauger*	Russ Bayer*	Carol Brown
Jon Carlson	Jerry Schleich	Bob Hampton	Linda Crump
Dan Marvin	Richard Meginnis	Terry Werner	Otis Young
Larry Zink	Allan Abbott (non-voting)		

(* = Selected by the Mayor as the Committee Tri-Chairs)

To ensure there would be effective communication of ideas across the various bodies, the members of the Committee were also asked to serve on one of the three Work Groups.

Membership on the Work Groups was then supplemented with additional community representatives. In all, a total of 47 individuals participated on the three Work Groups, with Committee Tri-Chairs serving as the Chair for the separate Work Groups:



Cost Savings/Efficiency	Finance	Legislation
Russ Bayer, Chair Carol Brown Jon Carlson Jerry Schleich Jennifer Brinkman Mark Brohman Brian Carstens Mark Hunzeker Roger Reynolds Duane Eitel Rick Krueger Greg MacLean Melinda Pearson Duane Hartman Greg Wood Patte Newman Allan Abbott (non-voting)	Brad Korell, Chair Bob Hampton Dan Marvin Richard Meginnis Terry Werner Otis Young Larry Zink Kent Seacrest Roger Severin Polly McMullen Tim Thietje Ron Ecklund Mark Hesser Keith Brown Tom Schleich Connie Jensen Lowell Berg Jim Budde Allan Abbott (non-voting)	Jan Gauger, Chair Linda Crump Bruce Bohrer Darlene Starman Bill Austin Alan Hersch Steve Larrick Ken Winston Bruce Kevil Brian Krannawitter Beatty Brasch Bob Peterson Chris Beutler Allan Abbott (non-voting)

Meeting Process

In order to facilitate the development and exchange of ideas among the Committee and three Work Groups, a meeting approach and schedule was established early-on in the process.

The main Committee agreed to meet on a monthly basis during the initial phase of the review. The individual Work Groups agreed to a varied meeting schedule based upon the needs and timing of their group.



The Legislation Work Group, for example, was asked to produce their initial findings before the end of calendar year 2002. This was the result of wanting to have their ideas to the local elected officials before the beginning of the Nebraska Unicameral session in January, 2003. For this reason, the Legislation Work Group met every couple weeks from their first meeting in October, 2002, until concluding their work in December, 2002.

The Cost Savings and Efficiency Work Group initially established a weekly meeting schedule, with the hope of completing their work early in calendar year 2003. After meeting several times, the Work Group modified its approach and set January 14th and 15th, 2003, for a series of evening workshops. Following these working sessions, the Group returned to their weekly meeting routine, and concluded its work in mid-March, 2003.



The Finance Work Group met approximately twice a month during the balance of calendar year 2002 in an effort to establish an agreed-to funding gap figure. During the early part of 2003, they continued to meet twice a month but increased their meetings to about weekly during March and April.

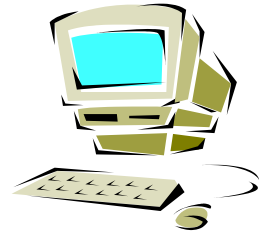
The MIFC Committee continued its monthly meetings into the month of March. After that – as the broader results of the Work Groups became available — the Committee began meeting nearly weekly with a revised completion date set for early May, 2003.

Community Input Opportunities

The MIFC Committee and Work Groups all sought community input through a variety of means.

As part of the meeting agenda for all the bodies, time was set aside for community members to address the respective groups.

In addition, an Internet website was established at the very start of the process. The site contained copies of the materials distributed at each meeting, and included a written meeting summary of each session. The website also provided the opportunity for anyone to access the site to submit comments to the Committee and Work Groups.



The Cost Savings and Efficiency Work Group held an open house on the evening of January 30, 2003, at Walt Public Library in south Lincoln. The purpose of this event was to give the community a chance to informally review the work-in-progress ideas of the Work Group and to meet with the Work Group members.

